

Program Overview and Tips:

When Should Juveniles be Tried as Adults?

Note: This material was prepared by Colorado District Judges David Prince and David Shakes who would be happy to talk to you about the program. They can be reached at: david.prince@judicial.state.co.us (719 452-5234) or david.shakes@judicial.state.co.us

Overview:

- Your goal is to teach the class the role of the judge in the American legal system: to apply the law, fairly and impartially, to each specific case.
- You will do this using the issue: When should a juvenile offender be subject to adult penalties? You will help them set a legal standard (“write a law”) to answer this question.
- The bulk of your class time will be spent with students in small groups acting as trial judges and applying the “law” they write to individual fact scenarios.

*Emphasize frequently: **a judge’s job is to apply the law***

Crucial Tips:

- Stick with the program model. This model has plenty of room for your creativity, but you must stick to the basic model of the students doing the talking and analysis
- The scenarios are key. The student’s work applying their “law” to the scenarios (not your lecture) is the whole point of the program.
- Keep the student groups to about 4-6 students per group, that is the “sweet spot” for getting them engaged. Don’t worry if more than one group has the same scenario.
- Tell them (more than once) that the scenarios are from real cases, this makes a difference to them.
- Do not talk to them about Indiana’s laws on this topic until the conclusion. The point is for them to apply the law they wrote. This gives them more buy in.
- Keep an eye on the clock, time management is likely your biggest challenge. Know when the class starts and ends and write down specific time deadlines for yourself ahead of time for completing the major components. Write them on the board.